

Message Text

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SUBJECT: IMPRESSIONS GISCARD VISIT

1. SUMMARY: GISCARD'S VISIT SYMBOLIC SUCCESS EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS. WHILE BASIS FOR FORWARD STEPS IN BILATERAL COOPERATION TAKEN, MOST OF HISTORICAL COMPLICATIONS REMAIN. END SUMMARY.

2. ATMOSPHERE SURROUNDING GISCARD VISIT GREW INCREASINGLY WARMER AFTER CORDIAL BUT SOMEWHAT UNCERTAIN BEGINNING. LARGE ENTHUSIASTIC AND SPONTANEOUS RECEPTION GIVEN GISCARD DURING HIS CONSTANTINE AND SIKKDA VISIT SURPRISED AND PLEASED ALL OBSERVERS. FRENCH CULTURAL COUNSELOR EVEN ENTHUSIASTICALLY OBSERVED, SOMEWHAT ETHNOCENTRICALLY, THAT ALGERIANS WERE "RELIVING THEIR CHILDHOOD" UNDER FRENCH RULE. EVEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, WHOSE CHILDHOOD PRESUMABLY DOES NOT HOLD MANY FOND MEMORIES OF THAT RULE, GAVE GISCARD ENTHUSIASTIC WELCOME.

3. PERHAPS BEST EXAMPLE OF CORDIALITY PERVAING VISIT WAS BOUMEDIENE'S PERSONAL REQUEST TO GISCARD TO ATTEND FRENCH EMBASSY RECEPTION FOR 4000 MEMBERS FRENCH COMMUNITY. GISCARD NATURALLY AGREED AND BOUMEDIENE AND
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SMALL ENTOURAGE SPENT ABOUT 20 MINUTES AT RECEPTION,

ARRIVING AND LEAVING TO LOUD APPLAUSE OF FRENCH INVITEES.

4. DURING THREE DAY VISIT BOUMEDIENE AND GISCARD ARE ESTIMATED TO HAVE SPENT WELL OVER TEN HOURS TALKING PRIVATELY. FRENCH EMBASSY SOURCES OBSERVED THAT SINCE BOUMEDIENE ENIGMA IN FRANCE AND GISCARD ENIGMA HERE, AND SUSPECT ONE AT THAT BECAUSE OF HIS REPEATED PREVIOUS HARD LINE ON ALGERIAN ISSUES, THIS DIRECT DISCUSSION AND EXPOSURE PERHAPS MOST USEFUL ASPECT OF VISIT.

5. NEVERTHELESS, IF THEME OF "NEW PAGE-LET'S LOOK TO FUTURE" AND SYMPATHETIC WELCOME SHED WARM GLOW, BOTH FRENCH AND ALGERIANS PRAGMATIC ENOUGH NOT TO ALLOW GLOW OBSCURE CONCRETE ISSUES.

6. JOINT COMMUNIQUE AND GISCARD PRESS CONFERENCE DOMINATED BY GENERALITIES. ONLY OCCASIONAL HARD NUGGET SURFACES, INCLUDING: A. GISCARD ANNOUNCEMENT OF FRENCH INTENTION TO REDEPLOY PART OF FRENCH NAVAL RESOURCES TO MEDITERRANEAN; B. ANNOUNCEMENT OF DETERMINATION TO PRESS FORWARD WITH NEGOTIATIONS ON GAS PIPELINE IN WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN; AND C. FRENCH STATEMENT OF APPRECIATION FOR ALGERIA'S "POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION" TO EUROPEAN SECURITY CONFERENCE. (PRESUME FBIS CARRYING FULL TEXTS.)

7. MORE EFFORT MAY HAVE GONE INTO COMMUNIQUE THAN SURFACES. ACCORDING FRENCH EMBASSY SOURCE, WHEN GIVEN ALGERIAN DRAFT OF FINAL JOINT COMMUNIQUE CONTAINING THEME FROM BOUMEDIENE'S SPEECH THAT "ALL MAJOR ISSUES ARE NOW RESOLVED", FOURCADE REACTED STRONGLY IN PRIVATE, STATING THAT ISSUE OF FRENCH PROPERTY SEIZED BY GOA COULD NOT BE DISMISSED THIS WAY. PHRASE ULTIMATELY BURIED IN LESS ABSOLUTE LANGUAGE. ANOTHER FRENCH EMBASSY SOURCE, AFTER HE HAD PRAISED WELCOME AND ALGERIAN ATTITUDE, WAS ASKED HOW SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS HAD GONE; HE STOPPED SMILING, MOPPED HIS BROW, AND SHOOK HIS HEAD. WE INFORMED THAT SAUVAGNARGUES HAD TO SKIP FRENCH EMBASSY RECEPTION SATURDAY MORNING TO CONTINUE HAMMERING OUT FINAL DETAILS OF COMMUNIQUE WITH ALGERIANS.
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8. WHEN OUR FRENCH CONTACTS HAVE RECOVERED FROM VISIT WE WILL PROBE FOR MORE DETAILS. RIGHT NOW IT APPEARS THAT WHILE SOME OF HISTORICAL POISON IN ALGERIAN/FRENCH RELATIONS HAS BEEN DRAWN BY GISCARD'S VISIT AND BASIS LAID FOR FUTURE COOPERATION, COMPLEXITIES OF CONCRETE BILATERAL ISSUES SUCH AS EMIGRATION AND FRENCH CLAIMS WILL REMAIN AS CHRONIC IRRITANTS BETWEEN TWO PRICKLY

BUT INEXTRICABLE PARTNERS.LYNE

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